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Chairman: Mr. Mapuranga ..... (Zimbabwe)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Expression of sympathy to the Mexican Government and people

1. **The Chairman**, referring to the cyclone that had just caused large-scale destruction and many casualties in Mexico, expressed the Committee's condolences to the Mexican Government and people. The international community was urged to respond to all appeals for help.

2. **Mr. Macedo** (Mexico) thanked the Chairman and the members of the Committee for their expression of sympathy, which he would transmit to his Government.

Requests for hearings (A/C.4/52/6)

3. **The Chairman** said that a request for a hearing had been submitted relating to the question of New Caledonia (A/C.4/52/6) by Mr. Rock Wamytan (Front de libération nationale Kanak socialiste). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to grant that request.

4. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 18: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*continued*) (A/52/23 (Part II), (Part V) and (Part VI), A/AC.4/52/L.3 and L.4, A/AC.109/2071, 2072, 2074 to 2078, 2080 to 2082, 2084, 2086 to 2088 and 2090)

Agenda Item 90: Information from non-self-governing territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/52/23 (Part IV) (Chapter VIII); A/52/365)

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Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*) (A/52/3, Chapter V, section E)

Agenda item 93: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of non-self-governing territories (*continued*) (A/52/388 and Add.1)

5. **Mr. Al-Zayani** (Bahrain) said that the year 2000 would mark the fortieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. In 1988, two years before the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the General Assembly, in its resolution 43/47, had proclaimed the decade from 1990 to the year 2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Nonetheless, it must be recognized that those efforts were long-standing and that, within the framework of its efforts to resolve international problems, the United Nations had unswervingly opposed colonialism, in particular through the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Special Committee had made a decisive contribution to the activities carried out with a view to eradicating colonialism in various parts of the world in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the right of peoples to self-determination and to live in independence, freedom and equality. The United Nations had made such efforts because the international community had been convinced that maintaining the yoke of colonialism impeded not only social, cultural and economic development of dependent peoples but also the development of international economic cooperation.

6. Since the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in 1960, most colonized peoples had attained independence and recovered their sovereignty through their concerted action and through the United Nations. Such action was based on the principles contained in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which called for the adoption of measures to accelerate the decolonization process. It had been followed by many other initiatives, particularly the adoption, on 12 October 1970, of a programme of action for the full implementation of the Declaration and a number of other resolutions.

7. The right of peoples to self-determination and the need to eradicate colonialism, racial discrimination and all forms of foreign domination were principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law. His delegation hoped that, as stated in the annex of the report of the Secretary-General on the full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to

Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/46/634/Rev.1), the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism would be able to attain its ultimate goal.

8. **Mr. Yousefi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, despite the achievements and efforts of the Special Committee since the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 17 Territories remained on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. His delegation had always supported the efforts of the Non-Self-Governing Territories for self-determination and independence. Although the Special Committee had shown considerable flexibility in recent years, some administering Powers refused to participate in its meetings or authorize the dispatch of visiting missions to the Territories concerned. Those administering Powers must agree to participate actively and fully in the deliberations of the Special Committee.

9. His delegation welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General was making every effort to strengthen the effectiveness of the Organization but believed that the importance of the United Nations decolonization programme would be diminished by transferring the Decolonization Branch from the Department of Political Affairs to the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services. His delegation believed that such restructuring would not necessarily enhance the efficiency of United Nations activities for decolonization. It therefore endorsed the draft resolution urging the Secretary-General to maintain the Decolonization Branch and all its functions pertaining to the Special Committee within the Department of Political Affairs, and to continue to make all necessary resources available to it.

10. **Mr. Bandora** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the failure of the many attempts over the years to enable the remaining 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their right to self-determination was essentially due to inflexible political attitudes and selfish economic interests. The peoples of those Territories had the right freely to determine their political status regardless of population and territorial size and how well endowed with resources they were. It was the responsibility of the United Nations to continue to exert pressure on the administering Powers to assist and prepare the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their right to self-determination. The administering Powers should, *inter alia*, foster the awareness of the peoples of those Territories of their right to determine their political status in accordance with the options outlined in General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV). They also had a duty to safeguard the resources of the Territories, preserve their environment and refrain from militarizing them.

11. The international community must be associated with efforts to prepare the Non-Self-Governing Territories for the exercise of their rights. If the administering Powers did not provide the necessary information as required under Article 73 *e* of the Charter and refused to receive visiting missions, the international community could neither measure the progress that had been made nor judge whether the necessary conditions existed for the exercise by the Non-Self-Governing Territories of their right to self-determination.

12. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the dialogue between the European Union and the administering Powers had made it possible to reach consensus on a resolution on small Territories and foreign economic interests. It hoped that the spirit of cooperation would speed up decolonization and that the administering Powers would resume cooperation with the Special Committee, in the manner of New Zealand and Portugal.

13. The Organization needed to know the real conditions prevailing in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and what measures had been taken to prepare their peoples for the exercise of their right to self-determination. It would be advisable to continue organizing regional seminars, because they were sometimes the only avenues through which the Special Committee had been able to receive information it needed from the peoples of those Territories as well as from other interested individuals and institutions. Cooperation was also required from the specialized agencies, some of which had yet to report on their implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

14. His delegation was pleased to note the progress made by Mr. James Baker and the parties to the conflict in Western Sahara. It hoped that the agreement on the proposed code of conduct for the referendum and the declaration of the parties with respect to the authority of the United Nations, as well as the agreement on the principles governing the resumption of the identification process, would finally make it possible to implement the settlement plan. Henceforth it would be necessary to preserve and consolidate the momentum of the Lisbon, London and Houston undertakings in order to build on what had been achieved and guard against any new setbacks in the process. The United Nations must maintain its vigilance so as to ensure that the referendum for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara took place in circumstances of openness and fairness.

15. His delegation knew that the Secretary-General's reform proposals aimed at transferring the Special Committee's secretariat from the Department of Political Affairs to the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services would be considered in detail by the

General Assembly, but it wished to add its voice to the opinion expressed by the Committee. His delegation believed that such a transfer would dilute the political importance of the Committee and that it was a measure which lacked administrative, financial or functional justification. The issue of decolonization had not been entirely settled. It was a political question which should be dealt with in the Department of Political Affairs. The Committee had always been effective in the Department of Political Affairs and his delegation saw no necessity or urgency in relocating its secretariat now that its mandate was coming to an end.

16. **Mr. Relang** (Marshall Islands) commended the United Nations and the former administering Power of the Marshall Islands for the assistance which they had given to his country, which had achieved its independence at the end of a peaceful decolonization process. The reluctance of certain administering Powers to cooperate with the Special Committee in considering the express desires of all the Non-Self-Governing Territories was troubling.

17. His delegation wished to thank the Chairman of the Special Committee and the delegation of Fiji for providing the Committee with honest assessments of the obstacles to achieving complete decolonization of all Non-Self-Governing Territories by the year 2000. His delegation called on the former administering Power of the Marshall Islands and on New Zealand to urge other administering Powers to follow their example and engage in the work of the Special Committee. It would not be possible to decolonize Non-Self-Governing Territories without the full cooperation and political will of the administering Powers.

18. His delegation was pleased to note the progress which had been made on the question of Tokelau and New Caledonia. The leaders of the South Pacific Forum had endorsed the recommendations on the question of New Caledonia presented in a report of the Forum's Ministerial Committee.

19. For more than 400 years, the population of the Marshall Islands had had no control over the economic, social, educational and military systems which had been imposed upon it. It had been unable to stop the testing of atomic and thermonuclear weapons in its boundaries, and continued to suffer from its appalling effects. The environment was still contaminated, disease and mortality rates had risen, populations had been displaced and the country continued to depend on foreign food supplies, medicine and science to resolve its problems. The Republic of the Marshall Islands expressed deep concern for the fate of its neighbour in the Pacific, French Polynesia, which had had a similar experience in the absence of self-determination.

20. The decolonization process could not be fully implemented, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991, without considering the political status of French Polynesia. Taking into account the inalienable right of the peoples of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination and independence in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, his delegation requested that the Fourth Committee should consider the political status of French Polynesia and should add it to the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. It also invited the Committee to consider the political status of all non-self-governing Pacific island populations. It warmly welcomed the participation of the Congressional Delegate and the Governor of Guam in the Committee's deliberations. It had no doubt that Guam's Administering Authority would extend the same cooperation and consideration to Guam that it had shown to the Marshall Islands during its decolonization process.

21. **Mr. Snoussi** (Morocco) said that Morocco had not requested that petitioners should be heard. It could have asked escapees from the Hamada camp to describe to the Committee their tribulations during years of imprisonment, destitution and deprivation. Morocco had assumed that, after the talks in Lisbon, London and Houston, which Mr. Baker had helped broker, a new phase had begun and that the other side would be pleased to see an end to the stalemate (referred to in the Secretary-General's report of November 1995), which it itself had created.

22. Instead, the Committee had heard from leftist militants and the like who had come to speak on an issue which was none of their business, pretending they were unaware of its complexities. Those petitioners had repeated what they had been taught to say, even though the provisions of the settlement plan had been confirmed during the talks and Morocco, a traditional country, had restated its position that it would defend the great traditional values inherent in its culture and civilization. The French so-called petitioner, M. Lecoq, had spoken entirely on his own behalf and not, as the French Embassy in Rabat had indicated, on behalf of the persons he purported to represent. Although the petitioners had spoken about the Spanish census in 1974, what they had not said was that it had been confirmed during the Houston negotiations that the census was only one eligibility criterion among others. They had also referred in part to the well-known phenomenon of the exodus of populations to the North, but said nothing whatsoever about the eyewitness testimony of those responsible for operation "Ecouvillon" in 1958, during which, as "Combats Sahraouis", written by

M. Patrick Reneau indicated, some 40,000 Saharans had fled to the North. There had been no mention of one indisputable fact: the combatants, hounded by two armies also using aircraft, had had no choice but to head north. Mauritania, to the south, had not yet won its independence, nor had Algeria, to the east. In his dogged defence of his friends, M. Lecoq had forgotten that, in his day, one of the leading proponents of his ideology, Jean Jaurès, had fought to defend the independence and territorial integrity of countries which had, like Morocco, been coveted by European imperialism since the beginning of the century.

23. In order to facilitate the resumption of the referendum process, Morocco had agreed, at the invitation of the Secretary-General and with the intervention of Mr. Baker, to contact the current representatives of part of the Saharan population held in the Hamada camps. Morocco had participated in the Lisbon, London and Houston talks, which had clarified the points in the settlement plan. Thanks to the work of Mr. Baker, there could no longer be any question about the clearly defined rules on the right of the Saharans to be registered where they were, and the positions on the other objectives of the plan and its components, including the problems of troop confinement, refugees and prisoners, as well as the Code of Conduct, would be respected by both sides.

24. As in the past, Morocco would continue to cooperate with the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) to organize a referendum. The referendum would prove that the Moroccan identity of the Sahara was not only a juridical and historical expression, but also reflected the attachment of part of the Moroccan people to the nation, its kingdom and its King.

25. Although the Moroccan delegation was convinced that the matter was exclusively one for the Security Council, it had worked to facilitate the drafting of a compromise text. It would explain its position when it came to considering the draft resolution on the issue.

26. **Mr. Tesfaye** (Ethiopia) said that his delegation was pleased with the progress made by the Special Committee on the situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and with the adoption, after protracted negotiations, of a resolution on small territories on 14 March 1997.

27. While maintaining the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly, and strictly adhering to the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Special Committee needed continually to take due consideration of the changing geopolitical climate and be more visionary in the discharge of its responsibilities, without ignoring the special or peculiar conditions of each Territory.

28. Despite the fact that the United Nations had made enormous contributions in achieving freedom for hundreds of millions of people across the globe, there were still seventeen Non-Self-Governing Territories which were not yet able to exercise their right to self-determination, and which looked to the United Nations for assistance. Hence, the international community should fulfil the commitment it had made and work to help them realize their aspirations.

29. Concerning information transmitted by the administering Powers to the Secretary-General, as called for in Article 73 of the Charter, his delegation stressed the importance of those Powers transmitting timely information on political and constitutional developments in their Territories, in order to help the Secretariat to prepare timely and up-to-date working papers that accurately depicted prevailing conditions in the Territories concerned.

30. While paying tribute to the Secretary-General for his efforts to strengthen the efficiency of the United Nations, his delegation expected a thorough and positive discussion on the rationale that had led to the transfer of the decolonization unit from the Department of Political Affairs to the newly established Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, and on the impact which that decision might have on the political essence and status of the decolonization programme.

31. With regard to Western Sahara, the last Non-Self-Governing Territory on the African continent, his delegation felt that the agreement on the pending issues which had so far prevented the settlement plan from being implemented, which Mr. James Baker had brokered between the parties concerned, represented a promising development for which the two parties should be congratulated. In that respect, it recalled that on 3 October 1997, the Ethiopian Minister for Foreign Affairs had reiterated Ethiopia's belief in the power of direct dialogue and expressed the hope that a free and fair referendum could soon be held in Western Sahara.

32. **Mr. Forrero** (Colombia) said that the fact that, ever since its establishment, the United Nations had achieved its greatest success in the area of decolonization, should not lead it to relax its efforts; instead it should redirect its activities to continue to assist the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, taking into account the new international situation, until they could exercise their right to self-determination and accede to independence.

33. In accordance with the principles laid down in the Charter, all States — *a fortiori* those which still possessed colonies — were required to respect and ensure respect for the right of the peoples to self-determination. For that reason it was essential that the Special Committee should have the necessary means and should enjoy the cooperation of the administering Powers in carrying out its task. Stressing that the Committee played a unique role at the multilateral level, his delegation recalled that the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries believed that the secretariat of the Committee should remain within the Department of Political Affairs and reaffirmed the right of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to establish a democratic regime, without being subjected to any pressure, and to reject any foreign military presence. The Non-Self-Governing Territories should be given the means to promote their economic and social development while respecting their culture and preserving their environment.

34. The Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had recently welcomed the accession of certain peoples to independence, reaffirmed its commitment to the complete elimination of colonialism and the implementation of the Plan of Action of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and noted that any attempt to destroy the national unity and territorial integrity of a country, either partially or totally, was incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

35. **Mr. Chekenyere** (Zimbabwe) said that although the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was drawing to an end, there were still 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories. The peoples of those Territories had the right to determine their own destiny. The Special Committee, which had done a sterling job since its inception 37 years previously, would have failed to fulfil its mandate if it did not succeed in eliminating all vestiges of colonialism by the next millennium. The fifty-second session of the General Assembly provided yet another opportunity to remind the States Members of the United Nations responsible for the administration of the Non-Self-Governing Territories of their obligations and commitments under the Charter and relevant General Assembly resolutions so that the entire international community could work to restore to the inhabitants of those Territories their dignity and their rights.

36. Zimbabwe, like any other country which had won its independence with the assistance of the international community and the Special Committee, attached great importance to the role played by the United Nations in promoting the exercise by the peoples of the colonial Territories of their right to self-determination and independence. It therefore urged the administering Powers to cooperate with the Special Committee and participate in its work so that the objective set by the General Assembly to eradicate colonialism by the year 2000 could be achieved.

37. With regard to Western Sahara, it was to be hoped that the efforts which had been deployed to resolve the conflict would bear fruit. It was commendable that the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to Western Sahara, Mr. James Baker, had been able to create the necessary conditions to proceed towards the full implementation of the settlement plan. His delegation fully agreed with the Secretary-General that MINURSO should be provided with the necessary resources as soon as possible in order to build on the current momentum. Zimbabwe also fully supported the Secretary-General's recommendation that MINURSO should proceed immediately with the implementation of the settlement plan, starting with the completion of the identification exercise.

38. His delegation also wished to congratulate the two parties, Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, on agreeing to enter into direct negotiations, which for many years had been the wish of OAU and the United Nations. It also urged the two parties to honour the agreements reached in London and Lisbon and signed in Houston. It believed that the cooperation of the two parties and the support of the United Nations were crucial for the success of the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy. Zimbabwe remained convinced that it was the responsibility of the United Nations to ensure that a just, free and transparent self-determination referendum was held to allow the Saharan people to determine their future freely, without any outside intervention or military or administrative constraint. It was now up to Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO to respect and abide by the agreements signed in Houston. Zimbabwe had great hope that the people of Western Sahara, the last Non-Self-Governing Territory on the African continent, would at long last be able to exercise their right of self-determination and join the family of nations as a sovereign entity.

39. In conclusion, his delegation wished to express its misgivings about the proposal contained in the Secretary-General's reform programme for the transfer of the decolonization unit from the Department of Political Affairs to the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services. Zimbabwe strongly believed that the political profile of the unit must be maintained until its mandate was fully implemented. Zimbabwe would oppose any proposal that sought to downgrade the political importance of the decolonization process. The United Nations was made up of sovereign Member States, many of

which had come into being as a result of that process. The sovereign rights of the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories could not be given second-class treatment.

40. **Mr. Terrier** (France), speaking in exercise of his right of reply, objected to the remarks by the representative of the Marshall Islands concerning the territories of French Polynesia. The people of those territories had consistently asserted, through an entirely democratic process, that they were part of the French Republic. French Polynesia was an integral part of the French Republic. One example was the fact that it participated in the national legislature (the National Assembly and the Senate) without any legal restrictions whatsoever. Its inhabitants were full citizens who enjoyed the same rights as citizens of the metropolitan country. French Polynesia enjoyed a large measure of autonomy within the French Republic. That status had been acquired in April 1996 on the eve of the territorial elections. At both the national level (the 1987 legislative elections) and the local level (the 1996 territorial elections), the majority of the population had unambiguously expressed their desire that Polynesia should remain under French sovereignty.

41. **The Chairman** said that, following his unofficial consultations with the representatives of Algeria and Morocco and direct negotiations between the Algerian and Moroccan delegations, a consensus resolution had been agreed upon. The Secretariat had been asked to circulate the text of the resolution to the members of the Committee.

Agenda item 84: Effects of atomic radiation (A/52/46)

42. **Mr. Meier-Klodt** (Germany) recalled that the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), whose forty-sixth session had been presided over by Mr. A. Kaul, had been established under General Assembly resolution 913 (X) dated 3 December 1955. Although the concerns of countries regrading the effects of atomic radiation had changed over the years, the Scientific Committee's *raison d'être* remained valid. It reviewed published scientific reports and technical documents with the aim of evaluating regional and global exposures to radiation and their attendant risks. The Committee had focused on exposures from natural sources of radiation, exposures from man-made sources of radiation, medical radiation exposures, the production and use of radio-isotopes, nuclear-power production, occupational radiation exposures, nuclear-weapons testing and accidents. Epidemiological studies of cancer caused by radiation, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) repair and mutagenesis and the hereditary effects of radiation also had been examined. Studies of survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continued to be a key source of epidemiological data on the effects of radiation exposure.

43. In 1995, the Scientific Committee had begun a new programme to review the data on atomic radiation and analyse the biological effects of radiation which would provide a comprehensive picture of the subject in the year 2000. For the past 42 years, the method of operation and the quality of the reports of UNSCEAR had made an important contribution. The Committee was a world authority in its field.

44. The draft resolution on the subject, which his delegation hoped would be adopted by consensus, incorporated some of the language of earlier resolutions and referred to paragraph 38 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 51/241 on the strengthening of the United Nations system, which had been adopted by consensus on 31 July 1997. The sponsors had made every effort to accommodate the concerns of various delegations. The following delegations were sponsors of the draft resolution: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation and Spain.

45. **Mr. Relang** (Marshall Islands) recalled that between 1946 and 1957, the Republic of the Marshall Islands had been the site of 67 nuclear-weapons tests conducted by the Administering Power during the trusteeship period. The bombs tested had been 7200 times more powerful than the atomic bombs used during the Second World War. The nuclear testing programme which had been carried out at the people's expense had shed light on the effects on man and the environment of exposure to excessive doses of radiation. Declassified documents proved that the effects of radiation were much more extensive than had been believed. Current generations of Marshall Islanders suffered the consequences and future generations would continue to do so. The number of people enduring illnesses attributable to radiation exposure was rising at an alarming rate, as was the incidence of cancer. It was becoming increasingly more difficult to provide adequate social, health and economic services.

46. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of the Marshall Islands had stated during the general debate at the current session, the knowledge gleaned on the effects of nuclear weapons from the test programme conducted in the Marshall Islands had made it possible to avert a nuclear war during the cold war. The people of the Marshall Islands and other Pacific islanders thus had paid

a heavy price. In its advisory opinion on the legality of threat or use of nuclear weapons, the International Court of Justice had recognized that the members of the international community had an obligation to achieve nuclear disarmament. That was all the more reason to call the attention of the international community to the effects experienced by the people of the Marshall Islands and to request its assistance.

47. Although his Government welcomed the studies carried out thus far by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, it believed that that work should be further elaborated, and was prepared to facilitate the Committee's task by providing it with declassified documents in its possession. It also was encouraged by recent indications that the United States was willing to address certain problems. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also had prepared an important study in the northern Marshall Islands.

48. His delegation appreciated the fact that it had been consulted by the sponsors of the draft resolution on the item. The text took into account some of its concerns. However, his delegation would carefully consider the recommendations on the re-evaluation of the role of UNSCEAR in the light of its concerns. It appealed to Governments and international organizations with expertise in the field to provide appropriate assistance needed for the clean-up and disposal of radioactive substances.

49. **Ms. Backes** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, whose member States were sponsors of the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Germany, noted that the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had been set up partly to meet the widespread concern of Member States regarding the dangers of atmospheric radiation levels resulting from nuclear weapons testing and partly out of the need to assemble and assess the available information on the effects of ionizing radiation on mankind and the environment. Although the grounds for concern had changed since the time that the Committee had been set up, the problems remained as pressing as in the past. It was enough to recall the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster in that regard. It was therefore essential to continue to gather information on the effects of radiation.

50. The Committee's reports and studies were recognized by the international scientific community and in many cases provided a basis for the introduction of national and international standards for protection against the harmful effects on current and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment were exposed.

51. The European Union awaited with interest the extensive assessment of information on radiation exposures worldwide and the comprehensive review of the biological effects of radiation, currently being prepared by the Committee. The results would represent the state of knowledge at the end of the millennium. She welcomed the Committee's collaboration with international organizations and other organizations in the United Nations system, particularly the World Health Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Labour Organization, the International Commission on Radiological Protection, the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements. The European Union assured the Special Committee, which continued to carry out its mandate with competence and independence of judgement, of its support. The following countries associated themselves with her statement: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

52. **Mr. Baby** (India) said that nuclear energy and its applications to medicine, industry and agriculture were becoming increasingly vital for improving health, standards of living, and the quality of life, particularly in developing countries. In that context, the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation was extremely important in providing a balanced perspective on the effects, levels and risks of atomic radiation.

53. Congratulating the Committee on its outstanding work, he noted that its reports were used as reference documents by scientists worldwide and served as a basis for international and national standards for radiation protection. His delegation wished to acknowledge the valuable contributions made by representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Commission on Radiological Protection and the International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements. India had cooperated closely with the Committee as Indian scientists had participated actively in the Committee's meetings and made positive contributions in the preparation of its annual reports.

54. Epidemiological studies of the world's population living in high-level natural radiation areas were very useful for radiation risk estimations in the context of occupational exposures. In India the peoples living in the coastal strip of Kerala had for over 13 centuries been exposed to high levels

of natural radiation. The levels of radiation in that region varied considerably, with the average dose being five to six times greater than normal. The studies carried out thus far by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, of the Department of Atomic Energy of India, showed that newborn children in the high-level natural background radiation areas did not have higher frequencies of micronuclei or chromosomal aberrations than those in the normal background radiation areas. Realizing the importance of such studies, the Indian Government had undertaken genetic epidemiological studies to cover the whole population. Furthermore, the available epidemiological data had shown that the inhabitants of the high-level natural radiation areas of Kerala were not at any higher risk than those in other areas. Such observations necessitated not only further studies but also a new outlook regarding the effects on humans of low chronic and high acute exposures.

55. India was convinced that although nuclear power was a demanding technology, it had the potential to give significant amounts of energy. As one of the largest isotope producers in the world, India was in the forefront in matters concerning the use of isotopes.

56. The Indian nuclear programme accorded prime importance to safety in all its activities through the entire nuclear fuel cycle, from prospecting and mining of ores to management of waste. Safety was an important subject for research and development in the various institutions of the Department of Atomic Energy and dedicated groups had been involved, since the inception of the programme, in continuous monitoring and upgrading of systems, on the basis of their own and others' experience. Over the years, India had progressively evolved its regulatory system. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) met the prevailing international norms of regulatory practices and had successfully carried out its function as watchdog over the Indian nuclear programme and over other installations handling radiation.

57. Lastly, he said that India would cooperate fully with the Committee in realizing the latter's objectives and that it would join the sponsors of the draft resolution entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" under agenda item 84.

58. **Mr. Felicio** (Brazil) said that it was time to review the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and perhaps to give it new guidance. That had been the position taken by Brazil during discussions by the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System, whose report had been noted by the General Assembly at the fifty-first session. It was appropriate to implement without delay the recommendation which the General Assembly had adopted inviting IAEA and WHO to consider the functions and role of the Scientific Committee and submit a recommendation on the issue to the Assembly at its fifty-third session, and to request the Scientific Committee to submit its report to IAEA and WHO, so that they could evaluate it and inform the General Assembly accordingly.

59. Over the years, IAEA and WHO had gained experience and technical expertise in the field of atomic radiation that the General Assembly lacked. Given that members of the Fourth Committee did not have the technical background required for the appropriate assessment of the Scientific Committee's report, that task should be given to IAEA and WHO. It would be possible later on to decide whether the Scientific Committee should continue to report to the General Assembly or, perhaps more appropriately, should function under the aegis of a specialized agency.

Organization of work

60. **The Chairman** reminded the Committee that the deadline for the submission of all draft proposals relating to agenda item 18 or amendments relating to the recommendations of the Special Committee on Decolonization had been fixed for Thursday, 16 October at 6 p.m. In view of the small number of speakers listed, the Committee would hold only one meeting, on Friday, 17 October.

61. **Mr. Ovia** (Papua New Guinea) announced that Algeria, South Africa and Venezuela had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.4.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/52/SR.8

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Summary record of the 8th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 17 October 1997, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Mapuranga ..... (Zimbabwe)

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Agenda item 84: Effects of atomic radiation (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 84: Effects of atomic radiation (*continued*) (A/52/46; A/C.4/52/L.2)

1. **Mr. Benítez Saénz** (Uruguay), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), as well as Bolivia and Chile, said that at its June 1997 session the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had, with a view to the optimal utilization of its technical capabilities, considered the question of the possible inclusion in its terms of reference of such topics as chemical and environmental pollution.

2. The basic task of the Scientific Committee was to serve as a source of background information for the international scientific community as a whole; that work constituted scientific assistance to countries suffering from the effects of atomic radiation. The growing complexity of the issues discussed made it necessary to intensify the efforts being made in two areas: first, to help to raise the level of awareness of those issues and the magnitude of their effects, and, second, to continue the search for rapid and viable solutions.

3. During the discussions in the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System, the idea had been put forward of suggesting to the Scientific Committee that it should submit its report to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), so that the General Assembly could take their comments into account in its discussion of the report. He urged delegations to put that idea into practice as soon as possible.

4. **Mr. Santaputra** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the increased use of atomic energy brought with it new perils; there was thus a vital need for continuing study, up-to-date information and revised safety measures. He urged Member States, the specialized agencies of the United Nations and other bodies, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and IAEA, as well as non-governmental organizations to continue to render assistance to the Scientific Committee and increase cooperation in that field. He welcomed the report of the Scientific Committee (A/52/46) and its efforts to provide delegations with information on the effects on, and risks to, mankind and the environment of atomic radiation.

5. Nuclear technology and its proper uses for peaceful purposes could be very helpful to mankind. Many benefits could be derived from nuclear power generation and the use of nuclear technology in medicine, industry and agriculture, which played an increasingly important role in raising living standards, especially in developing countries. He called for increased transfers of nuclear technology to developing countries, unimpeded access by those countries to nuclear technology and the provision of assistance to them in that area, as stipulated in article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

6. With regard to the harmful effects of atomic radiation, prevention was better than cure. The most effective way to mitigate the potential adverse effects of radiation was to implement non-discriminatory and multilaterally agreed measures to control or eliminate its undesirable sources. It was necessary to enhance the existing system that provided early warning of potential risks. He urged strict adherence to IAEA nuclear safety standards in the interest of minimizing those risks.

7. The problem of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials posed a great risk and a serious threat. Steps should be taken to ensure that all nuclear power plants operated in accordance with internationally accepted standards. The irresponsible dumping of nuclear waste and materials in the high seas should be stopped. The international transfer of nuclear waste and materials should be carried out in full conformity with existing international safety standards.

8. With regard to the military use of nuclear technology, ASEAN supported the efforts aimed at the total eradication of nuclear weapons within a specified time-frame.

9. He noted with satisfaction that on 27 March 1997, the South-East Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, signed by the leaders of the South-East Asian States at Bangkok in December 1995, had entered into force. He again called upon all nuclear-weapon States to accede to the Protocol to that Treaty.

10. **Mr. Mounkhou** (Mongolia) said that his delegation welcomed the report of the Scientific Committee. It had taken note of that Committee's work over the past year, and would follow with interest assessment of information on radiation exposures and its comprehensive analysis of the effects of radiation on living organisms, representing the level of knowledge at the end of the millennium.

11. Mongolia was grateful to the Scientific Committee for its reports and research, which had increased the stock of knowledge about the effects and dangers of atomic radiation and had led to the introduction of national and international standards of protection against the harmful effects of radiation. His delegation was sure that the Scientific

Committee would continue its fruitful work in the coming years.

12. At a time when the United Nations had embarked on a process of reform, the Scientific Committee should also review its role and functions. With its impressive array of scientific resources and highly qualified specialists, the Scientific Committee could undoubtedly bring great practical benefits to Member States. His delegation was particularly interested in the experience it had acquired in radiation dosimetry and radiobiological research. The Scientific Committee might consider the possibility of undertaking research on individual countries and of giving technical assistance in determining radioactive contamination levels in countries that might request such help.

13. Lastly, he hoped that the resolution on the effects of atomic radiation that was due to be adopted would help the Scientific Committee to meet Member States' special needs in relation to atomic radiation.

14. **Mr. Miranda** (Peru) said that his country greatly valued the professional standards and scientific competence of the Scientific Committee's reports and the independence of its assessments.

15. The Scientific Committee's programme of work duly reflected the important tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly with regard to the consequences, levels and dangers of atomic radiation.

16. When put to use in raising living standards through the development of medicine, industry and agriculture, the results of the Scientific Committee's research would be extremely significant for the whole international community, particularly for developing countries, which faced special difficulties in gaining access to scientific information. Peru awaited with interest the Scientific Committee's report on the state of knowledge of the effects of ionizing radiation worldwide and of its biological consequences.

17. His country particularly emphasized the importance of the Scientific Committee's cooperation with other United Nations bodies, and also with other international organizations working in that field; such cooperation should be expanded and strengthened on a mutually advantageous basis. Peru urged all Member States to supply the Scientific Committee with all available information that might help it to carry out its research more effectively.

18. **Mr. Syargeev** (Belarus), speaking on local exposures and effects of the Chernobyl accident, said that over 2 million people, inhabiting a quarter of the territory of Belarus, had been affected by radiation. The economic and financial loss suffered by Belarus as a result of the accident was equivalent to 32 of the country's annual budgets, or a sum of US$ 235 billion.

19. Secondly, regarding the epidemiological evaluation of radiation-induced cancer, he said that following the accident Belarus had seen a rise in infant mortality and a fall in birth rates. Some 500,000 children below the age of 17 lived in the contaminated territories. The incidence of cancer of the thyroid gland among children and of breast cancer among women had risen.

20. Chernobyl was a long-term problem that could be resolved only if the whole international community pooled its efforts. Outlining the main results of the work carried out over the past year by the scientific conferences in Geneva, Minsk, Vienna and Kiev, he said that the conferences had established the progressive deterioration in the health of the affected population; confirmed the formal recognition by the international scientific community of the true proportions of the Chernobyl tragedy; indicated that to eliminate the consequences of Chernobyl would take many decades; and underlined the importance of activating international cooperation in providing assistance and in continuing with scientific research directed at overcoming the consequences of the disaster.

21. Belarus was seriously concerned that, in the light of the current discussion on the closing of the Chernobyl nuclear power station, the problem of eliminating the medical and environmental effects of the disaster was being relegated to the background.

22. He drew attention to two major initiatives put forward by the President of Belarus at the Vienna conference on Chernobyl, one on the creation of an international centre for Chernobyl problems, which would unite the efforts of scientists from different countries who were conducting research in that area, and one relating to the need to establish a fund to protect the planet, which could receive a portion of the earnings of nuclear engineering companies and use them for the elimination of the effects of nuclear disasters and the implementation of major environmental programmes.

23. Belarus was interested in expanding contacts with the Scientific Committee, particularly in the preparation of new international radiation protection safety standards. His delegation was putting forward a specific proposal for the holding of an international scientific conference in 1998 under the sponsorship of the Scientific Committee to formulate a programme of international scientific research on the medical and environmental consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

24. Belarus wished to stress the extreme importance of upholding the principles of scientific competence and ensuring greater transparency in the activities of the Scientific Committee. In that connection, his delegation wished to register its deep concern at the current trend towards omitting consideration of the report of the Scientific Committee from the agenda of General Assembly sessions and attempts to assign its functions to IAEA or WHO, which in fact would mean eliminating it. Consideration at General Assembly sessions of the Scientific Committee's reports, notwithstanding their technical nature, was of great political interest. Strengthening the role and increasing the authority of the United Nations would promote the impartial and independent work of the Scientific Committee rather than its elimination.

25. **Ms. Arystanbekova** (Kazakhstan) said that her delegation attached great importance to the discussion in the Fourth Committee of the problem of the effects of atomic radiation within the framework of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly. That issue was of direct interest to Kazakhstan, which was making a great effort to solve the problems posed by the testing of nuclear weapons over many years at the former Soviet nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk.

26. That site, which had been created in the territory of Kazakhstan 50 years earlier, was the largest in the world, with a surface area of 18,500 square kilometres; some 470 tests, or roughly 70 per cent of all nuclear tests conducted by the former USSR, had been carried out there. The health of Kazakhstan's population and the country's environment had suffered tremendous damage, the actual scope of which remained unknown to the international community because of the conditions of strict secrecy prevailing at the time.

27. At the time the nuclear tests were conducted no measures had been taken to protect the population from radiation, nor had the necessary medical examinations been carried out. According to statistics, during the more than 40 years that tests had been conducted at the Semipalatinsk site, some 1.2 million people had been exposed to ionized radiation. The highest level of oncological diseases in Kazakhstan had been registered in the areas around the former Semipalatinsk site, and from 1950 onward the child mortality rate had increased between 5 and 10 times while life expectancy had decreased.

28. Under a decree issued by the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev, on 29 August 1991, the nuclear test site had been closed forever, and that unprecedented step had been deeply appreciated by the international community. In September 1996, Kazakhstan had reaffirmed its firm commitment to peace by signing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In September 1997 the country had hosted an international conference on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons which had dealt specifically with the problems of radiation safety and rehabilitation of the territory of the former test site. Conference participants had visited the former test site and had once again been convinced of the need to provide assistance to Kazakhstan, which was working to overcome the serious consequences of nuclear testing. In his message to conference participants, the Secretary-General had stressed that the problem of environmental degradation in Kazakhstan caused by nuclear tests called for the international community's attention.

29. On the former test site the National Nuclear Research Centre of the Republic of Kazakhstan had been established; Kazakhstan had passed a law on the rehabilitation of persons who had suffered from the nuclear tests, a programme of medical rehabilitation for the population of the Semipalatinsk region had been developed and a series of other measures had been taken. However, Kazakhstan currently lacked the necessary medical, material and financial means and sufficient experience to provide a full measure of government support to the suffering population. It could not by itself compensate the damage done to the population's health and to the environment.

30. As the President of Kazakhstan had stated at the special session of the General Assembly earlier in the year, nuclear weapons were a tragedy not only for the people of Kazakhstan but for all the nations of the world; thus there was every reason to speak about the responsibility of the nuclear Powers for the damage done to the people and the natural environment of States in which tests had been conducted. She drew attention in that connection to the proposal by the President of Kazakhstan to concretize that responsibility in the form of an international fund for the rehabilitation of the health of the population and the environment of regions affected by nuclear tests, and she expressed the hope that the States Members of the United Nations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system would respond to those initiatives.

31. Kazakhstan greatly appreciated the work and the noble goals of the Scientific Committee and was willing to cooperate with it fully. In her delegation's view, the problems of the effects of atomic radiation, which Kazakhstan was facing in real life, afforded a basis for the development, with interested countries, of joint research programmes in Kazakhstan. Medical examinations of affected persons and scientific research in the vicinity of the former test site would also be useful to Kazakhstan and other interested parties.

32. **Mr. Semenenko** (Ukraine) said that the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in 1986 had been a real national tragedy for Ukraine. The state of health of many people living in Ukraine who had been affected by the consequences of the accident was cause for particular concern. The suppression of the body's immune system, cancer induction and genetic damage were just a few of the direct results of long-term radiation contamination of the environment.

33. The Chernobyl disaster had also caused large-scale social and economic problems. Over the period 1990-1996 alone, more than 53,000 people had been resettled from contaminated zones to environmentally clean locations. Every year, up to 15 per cent of the State budget was spent on reimbursing the losses caused by the accident and paying out social allowances to people who had been affected by it.

34. In view of the unprecedented scale of the disaster and its transnational character, the overall solution of the problem was impossible without large-scale international assistance. Special attention should be given to the reconstruction of the sarcophagus that had been built over the damaged reactor. By the most modest estimates, that would require US$ 1 billion.

35. His delegation hoped that those and other problems would be properly addressed at the Donor Conference of the "Group of Seven" countries, which would be held in New York on 20 November 1997, and at the forthcoming United Nations Donor Conference. It also hoped that the United Nations inter-agency needs assessment mission to the affected regions, including Ukraine, would serve to strengthen international cooperation in overcoming all the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster.

36. **Mr. Hrbáč** (Slovakia) supported the statement made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union, and he wished to make a few additional comments on behalf of his delegation. As a country with an active programme in the field of the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Slovakia had been providing relevant data to the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and was making full use of the Scientific Committee's results in its own practical activities.

37. During recent years, significant progress had been achieved in the study of radiation affects and risk assessment, largely thanks to the Scientific Committee. His delegation welcomed the Scientific Committee's latest report and endorsed its efforts to put greater emphasis on the assessment of the combined effects of radiation and other agents as well as the assessment of radiation-induced cancer and hereditary effects.

38. Slovakia hoped that the traditional consensus on the agenda item under consideration would be maintained. New paragraph 9 of the draft resolution reflected the suggestion by some delegations to strengthen the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in an area that had been dominated by the Scientific Committee. His delegation would study attentively the recommendations of IAEA and WHO on the functions and role of the Scientific Committee. At the same time, his delegation wished to point out that the Scientific Committee had so far been free of political, social or scientific bias, and any step that could weaken the impartiality of such an important activity as the study of the effects of atomic radiation should be very carefully considered.

39. **Mr. Hu Zhaoming** (China) welcomed the results of the forty-sixth session of the Scientific Committee, which had considered extremely important problems that affected the health and living environment of the current and future generations. The Chinese Government supported the Scientific Committee's activities and highly appreciated the success it had achieved. His delegation was pleased to note that the Scientific Committee was preparing an extensive assessment of information on radiation exposures worldwide and a comprehensive review of the biological effects of radiation.

40. The Chinese Government attached great importance to economic development and the state of the environment and people's health. The study on assessment criteria and methods of inspection for optimized application of radiation protection in nuclear plants had been incorporated into China's national programme of key technologies and research and development projects of the ninth five-year plan. China's national standard on protection against radiation was being prepared.

41. His delegation hoped that, in its future work, in which China would take an active part, the Scientific Committee would provide Member States, especially the developing countries, with the necessary information on the effects of atomic radiation.

42. **Mr. Myung Chul Hahm** (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation highly commended the efforts of the Scientific Committee, which had greatly contributed to the improvement of standards that helped protect mankind and the environment from the harmful effects of atomic radiation. The Republic of Korea welcomed the cooperation between the Scientific Committee and other specialized

agencies of the United Nations system, such as IAEA, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and WHO, since inter-agency cooperation was essential for establishing strong global guarantees against the harmful effects of atomic radiation.

43. As a country that depended heavily on nuclear energy, the Republic of Korea attached great importance to ensuring safety in nuclear-related activities. His delegation noted that the reports and studies provided by the Scientific Committee had been highly valuable in helping to enhance standards for radiation protection. They had also helped technicians and managers in the Republic of Korea to lay a scientific basis for formulating new measures to guard against the harmful effects of radiation.

44. His delegation looked forward to the early completion of an extensive assessment of information on radiation exposures worldwide and a comprehensive review of the biological effects of radiation, which were mentioned in the report of the Scientific Committee on its forty-sixth session. The Republic of Korea, for its part, would continue furnishing relevant information.

45. **Mr. Hassan** (Pakistan) said that in-depth research over the years had revealed that atomic radiation could have devastating effects on man and the environment. It was therefore the collective responsibility of the international community to exchange information and to take all necessary measures to obviate the risk of radiation. Cooperation in that sector within the framework of the United Nations had begun in 1955 with the establishment of the Scientific Committee. His delegation expressed appreciation to the Scientific Committee for its contribution in highlighting the adverse effects of atomic radiation on man and the environment. The General Assembly had assessed progress in that regard and provided directions for further research and cooperation, and it must continue to do so.

46. In the report compiled by the Scientific Committee in June 1997, a wide spectrum of areas had been identified on which future study should focus; the Scientific Committee must be encouraged to coordinate further research in those vital areas.

47. His delegation was prepared to respond positively to the Scientific Committee's request for assistance in its work by providing relevant information on the subjects of interest for the future programme of study so that the work could be based on the broadest and most up-to-date scientific and technical information. Pakistan recognized that international institutions like IAEA and WHO had been of enormous help to the Scientific Committee and encouraged them to continue to cooperate with that body.

48. In order to minimize the risk of atomic radiation, it was necessary to take measures to reduce and eventually eliminate large stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The tragedies of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Chernobyl could not be allowed to happen again, and it was the responsibility of the international community to protect future generations from the scourge of nuclear warfare.

49. The end of the cold war had brightened the prospects of cooperation among the major Powers in the nuclear field, and in 1996 the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had been concluded. Pakistan had consistently supported the objective of a comprehensive nuclear test ban. Unfortunately, the Treaty fell short of the expectations of the international community as an effective measure for nuclear disarmament. That shortcoming should be redressed by the inclusion in the text of legally binding commitments to the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time-frame.

50. Efforts to protect the planet from the adversities of radiation must not be at the cost of the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, since it was the sovereign right of every State to acquire nuclear technology for peaceful uses, particularly in the fields of medicine, energy and agriculture. Moreover, technological advancement should not be monopolized by certain countries, and there should be a sharing of knowledge and information among the developed and developing countries.

51. Pakistan supported the continuation of the work of the Scientific Committee and opposed the idea of restricting or eliminating its role. It believed that the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System needed to review its recommendations in that regard. Pakistan was firmly convinced that the Scientific Committee was a representative forum for the exchange of information among Member States on atomic radiation; if its work was transferred to other bodies, the representative character of the Scientific Committee would be destroyed and that might result in slowing down the progress of work in that vital area of research and international cooperation.

52. **Mr. Samana** (Papua New Guinea) said that the issue of atomic radiation had been on the agenda of the United Nations and other organizations like the South Pacific Forum for a long time. His delegation, like the delegations of most neighbouring States, had repeatedly called on the international community, and especially those States that had been directly involved in nuclear testing in the South Pacific region — the United States of America and France — to do

more in the way of assisting the peoples directly affected. Those delegations were encouraged by the efforts currently being made by those countries but reiterated their call on those States to draw up comprehensive plans for the full clean-up of nuclear waste in the region.

53. As the representative of the Marshall Islands had indicated, the effects of atomic radiation were very real; they affected the daily lives of the people and could also affect future generations. He joined the appeal of the Marshall Islands for international assistance in treating the suffering populations in that country and neighbouring South Pacific countries.

54. Papua New Guinea commended the work that was being undertaken by the Scientific Committee; it supported in principle the draft resolution put forward by the delegation of Germany although it wished to cooperate with that delegation in strengthening the resolution a little so as to take account of some of the concerns already mentioned. He hoped that the Committee would seriously consider those changes, especially in the common approach of the South Pacific countries to bringing certain medical, scientific and other socio-economic benefits to alleviate the sufferings of the populations of the countries affected.

55. The participants at the recent meeting of the heads of Government of the South Pacific Forum countries had clearly indicated that the issue under consideration was of paramount concern in the region and reaffirmed their commitment to the provisions of the South Pacific Nuclear-Free-Zone Treaty and the Waigani Convention by calling for adherence to those treaties and their protocols.

56. As indicated by the representative of the Marshall Islands, the people of the region, especially those of the Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Micronesia, did not know the true extent of the personal injuries and environmental damage caused by the 67 nuclear tests conducted by the administering Power from 1946 to 1957. Papua New Guinea joined those countries in their call for assistance in medical, scientific and other socio-economic fields to alleviate the sufferings of the population.

57. **Mr. Buni** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) drew the attention of members of the Committee to the report of the Chairman of the Scientific Committee concerning the effects of atomic radiation and radioactive fallout and, in that connection, noted with concern the danger of radioactive waste as a result of Israel's nuclear activities. With the help of the United States, Israel had established its own nuclear arsenal, which presented a threat to the region as a whole.

58. His delegation took note of the moratorium on nuclear tests introduced by the nuclear Powers and urged the international community to make every effort to save mankind from the danger inherent in nuclear arsenals. The use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes could promote prosperity and progress, but the international community must pay attention to the attempts made by some countries to dictate their conditions for the transfer of nuclear technology to certain developing countries which wished to use it for peaceful purposes. His delegation urged the developed countries to help the developing countries to utilize nuclear energy for the good of their peoples.

59. **The Chairman** informed the members of the Committee that Slovakia, Brazil, Indonesia and Kazakhstan had joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.2 and suggested that the Committee should take a decision on it.

60. **Mr. Hassan** (Pakistan), speaking in explanation of his delegation's position, said that it had not become a sponsor of the draft resolution at the current session because it had some reservations concerning the addition of paragraph 9.

61. **Mr. Hu Zhaoming** (China) said that his delegation had carefully studied the draft resolution and believed that it could provide an excellent basis for work. His delegation regretted that it had been unable to take part in the informal consultations, but believed that the draft resolution was the result of serious work. At the same time, it noted that the text of the draft resolution was marred by repetitions. For instance, in the sixth preambular paragraph reference was made to section XII, paragraph 38, of the annex to resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997 on strengthening of the United Nations system. The content of that paragraph coincided with that of paragraph 9 except that in paragraph 9 the last sentence of paragraph 38 had been omitted. His delegation would like an explanation on that point and suggested that the text of the draft resolution would be improved if paragraph 9 was omitted. If the majority of delegations believed it necessary to retain that paragraph, then perhaps it would be expedient to include the last sentence of paragraph 38 in paragraph 9 of the draft resolution under consideration.

62. **Mr. Felicio** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, said that the delegation of Germany, which had acted as coordinator during the consultations, would reply to the questions which had been raised. His delegation, however, wished to point out that paragraph 9 only repeated the decision taken by consensus by the General Assembly, in plenary meeting, at its fifty-first session when it was considering the report of the Open-

ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System. It was quite probable that, judging from the course of the debate, there was some misunderstanding of the nature of the work of the Scientific Committee; in that connection, he wished to explain that during the discussion there had been no proposal that the item concerning the Scientific Committee should be removed from the Committee's agenda. On the contrary, in order to achieve real results from the consideration of the report, it was essential to have the necessary technical knowledge and resources, which were at present lacking. The General Assembly had therefore adopted, by consensus, the aforementioned decision in which it requested that consultations should be held with IAEA and WHO so that it would be possible to carry out a more knowledgeable analysis of the report of the Scientific Committee.

63. **Mr. Meier-Klodt** (Germany) noted that, although the draft resolution had been introduced by his delegation, it had been acting as an "honest broker" as current Chairman of the Scientific Committee. Thus, his delegation's role had been, with the help of other delegations, to achieve a consensus, which from the outset had been characterized by particular attention to the aforementioned resolution.

64. As to the questions raised by other delegations, he noted that the Scientific Committee had very limited possibilities on account of its small membership and that, in order to describe the possibilities and limitations of its work in more detail, its Chairman, Mr. Kaul, had been invited to come to New York. In including the new paragraph 7, the sponsors had been endeavouring to introduce a new element; that had been confirmed by Mr. Kaul, who, during bilateral talks with the delegations concerned, had proposed that they should provide the Scientific Committee with additional information so that it could take it into account within its terms of reference. The Scientific Committee did not have an opportunity to send missions to the regions and therefore had to work only on the basis of the information it received.

65. With regard to the decision already adopted by consensus by the Open-ended High-level Working Group on Strengthening the United Nations System, two references to that decision had been included in the draft resolution — in the sixth preambular paragraph and in paragraph 9, as the representative of China had rightly pointed out. That had been done after the general debate and bilateral contacts between many delegations. Some delegations, including those of China and Pakistan, believed that the reference in the preamble was sufficient. Others held the strong view that, if the wording of paragraph 38 of the annex to resolution 51/241 was taken into account, it was essential to add those provisions to the draft resolution which had been submitted.

66. It should be noted that the wording of the paragraph in the annex to the resolution on the strengthening of the United Nations system was in the form of a recommendation. It stated that "the General Assembly should invite the International Atomic Energy Agency ..." and, later, "the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation should be asked ...". The idea had been that, since the recommendation had been made, agenda item 84 was the appropriate item for its implementation. The words "invites" and "requests" had thus been included in paragraph 9. It was believed that such an interpretation, taking into account the views of the members of the Committee, was an acceptable compromise. The reason why the last sentence of paragraph 38 of the annex to resolution 51/241 had not been included was that it did not contain any element that was appropriate for inclusion in the operative part of a resolution. However, he agreed with the comment of the representative of China and proposed, as a compromise, that the last sentence of paragraph 38 should be included in paragraph 9.

67. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the draft resolution, as revised, would be adopted by consensus and that the following year, in the light of the recommendations that had been made, the question would be considered in greater detail. In that connection, it was understood that the significance of the Scientific Committee should not be reduced.

68. **The Chairman** invited the members of the Committee to take note of the proposal for the inclusion in paragraph 9 of an additional sentence, as a compromise, in view of the comment of the representative of China.

69. **Mr. Hu Zhaoming** (China) said that he was satisfied with the reply and the explanation given by the representative of Germany and he was grateful for the recommendation that the last sentence of paragraph 38 should be included in paragraph 9 of the draft resolution. His delegation attached great significance to the work of the Scientific Committee and hoped that it would discharge the mandate entrusted to it. Taking those considerations into account, his delegation would join the consensus.

70. **Mr. Hassan** (Pakistan) said that his delegation was fully satisfied with the explanations given by the representatives of Germany and Brazil to the effect that the role and functions of the Scientific Committee would be in no way reduced and that all decisions would be taken after the submission of the report to IAEA and WHO. However, his delegation supported the recommendation of the Open-

ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System. Since it was not clear what the role and functions of the Scientific Committee would ultimately be, his delegation would support the draft resolution but would not be among its sponsors.

71. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to adopt the draft resolution, as orally revised by the representative of Germany, without a vote.

72. *The draft resolution was adopted.*

Organization of work

73. **The Chairman** noted that, in accordance with the decision taken earlier by the Committee, decisions on all the draft resolutions concerning decolonization would be taken on Monday, 27 October 1997. Moreover, with a view to making the Committee's workload and the voting procedure easier, the Secretariat would, at the beginning of the following week, issue document A/C.4/52/L.7, which would indicate the symbol of the documents and the order in which decisions on the draft resolutions would be adopted by the Committee.

74. In response to a request he had received from the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, he suggested that the Committee should listen to a briefing by the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on decolonization, speaking on behalf of its Chairman, on the informal consultations with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in connection with draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.4.

75. *It was so agreed.*

76. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Special Committee on decolonization, said that he wished to inform the members of the Committee about the meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations held on 15 October. At the beginning of the meeting, the Secretary-General had informed the sponsors of the draft resolution that he was directly involved in questions concerning the work of the Committee and that he had discussed issues relating to decolonization with the Presidents and Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries concerned. He had emphasized that his proposal was of a purely administrative nature and that the Special Committee on decolonization would be guaranteed the necessary services in the forthcoming period.

77. The Chairman of the Special Committee on decolonization had emphasized that the position of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.4 was not related to the reforms implemented by the Secretary-General. The sponsors of the draft resolution felt it was essential to state that the decolonization programme should remain in the Department of Political Affairs in view of the political nature of decolonization measures. The members of the Special Committee on decolonization had felt it essential to point out that agreement with the Secretary-General's decision could be misinterpreted by the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories since that step would, in their view, signify that the United Nations was leaving them to the mercy of fate. It had been emphasized that that direction of administrative reform had very serious consequences for the political substance of the work of the Special Committee on decolonization. The Chairman of the Special Committee, on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, had appealed to the Secretary-General to reconsider his decision. After the statement by the Chairman of the Special Committee on decolonization, the floor was given to the sponsors of the draft resolution, who confirmed their position, as stated by the Chairman, and noted, in particular, that the Secretary-General should reconsider his decision. The Permanent Representative of Portugal had proposed that action on the Secretary-General's decision should be postponed until the expiry of the mandate of the Special Committee on decolonization and the completion of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, in other words until the year 2000. In the ensuing discussion, the Secretary-General suggested that he should be given one year to check the effectiveness of his proposal, after which he would either leave it in force, if it proved to be correct, or rescind it, if it was not justified.

78. After the meeting with the Secretary-General, the sponsors of the draft resolution met once again and discussed the proposal. All the speakers reaffirmed that the decolonization programme must remain in the Department of Political Affairs and noted, in particular, that the Secretary-General's attention should be drawn to the decisions and positions of the sponsors of the draft resolution to the effect that they insisted that the programme should remain in the Department of Political Affairs. A letter was sent to the Secretary-General. The sponsors of the draft resolution expressed the hope that their request would be met, since it was based on purely political considerations, the work of the Special Committee on Decolonization being essentially of a political nature.

79. **Mr. Hu Zhaoming** (China) thanked the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for the briefing and said that the measures taken by the Secretary-General should be studied carefully. At present, that could be done in the informal consultative group of the General Assembly. In order to facilitate consideration of the question referred to by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, his delegation

would like to request that representative, through the Chairman, to provide the information given in his briefing in writing for circulation to deiegations.

80. **The Chairman** said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that request. He hoped that the consultations between the Secretary-General and the sponsors of the draft resolution would lead to a mutually acceptable result satisfactory to both sides.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/52/SR.9

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Summary record of the 9th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 27 October 1997, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Mapuranga ..... (Zimbabwe)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 18: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (*continued*)

Hearing of petitioners

Question of New Caledonia (A/C.4/52/6)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms. Winslow (Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste) took a place at the petitioners' table.*

2. **Ms. Winslow** (Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste (FLNKS)) said that Mr. Wamytan, President of FLNKS, regretted that he was unable to attend the meeting in person.

3. As the end of the process established under the Matignon accords, due to conclude in 1998, approached, FLNKS felt that significant progress had been made, particularly from 1989 to 1995, in respect of public infrastructure, education, health, economic development, vocational training and managerial training. The results were less satisfactory in respect of the development of Nouméa, the interior and the islands. Despite the optimism constantly professed by the French Government, the Kanak population as a whole had not yet benefited from the Matignon accords, as had been noted by the interministerial mission of the South Pacific Forum in August 1997. France had failed to honour any of its demographic commitments: it had not fulfilled its undertaking to repatriate 24,000 French nationals and was continuing to encourage French immigration to New Caledonia. The 1996 census showed that since 1989, between 15,000 and 20,000 French nationals from the metropolis and overseas Territories had immigrated to New Caledonia, for a total of nearly 8,000 new voters. At the economic level, reforms must continue so as to make the economy more self-sufficient; FLNKS, in demanding that nickel deposits be ceded immediately to allow the establishment of a metallurgical factory in the north, wished to provide the Territory with new economic leverage.

4. FLNKS reaffirmed that the only solution which could provide lasting political stability was the establishment, in 1998, of a State in association with France, a compromise solution which should lead New Caledonia, after a transitional period, to full sovereignty. That arrangement would reconcile the legitimate claims of the Kanak people, an ancient people which had become a minority because of organized immigration but in each election had expressed its determination to accede to sovereignty and independence, with those of the other ethnic communities which had arrived in the Territory through colonization, the vast majority of whom, for various reasons, wished to remain within the French Republic.

5. That approach would have the advantage of establishing an irreversible process of accession to sovereignty after 1998, as opposed to yet another statute which would fail to meet the basic demands of the people and lead to further instability and of settling the colonial question through the transfer to the Territory of certain areas of jurisdiction (natural resources, land ownership, etc.). Any other statute which did not embody the principles of an associated State would be doomed to failure and would undermine political and economic stability.

6. The administering Power, France, must undertake its task of decolonization and assume its responsibility towards history. It must settle the colonial dispute by guiding the new State towards full sovereignty, with respect for the inalienable right of the Kanak people to freedom and independence, in accordance with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In the past, each of the statutes promulgated had integrated the Territory and the Kanak people a little more closely into France, to the detriment of true development which would build on local potential and create greater independence at the economic and financial levels.

7. There were already points of agreement between FLNKS and the Rassemblement pour la Caledonie dans la République (RPCR) relating to shared sovereignty and political emancipation. Yet the positions of the various parties were still far apart, and efforts must be made to find a solution which would reconcile apparently contradictory positions.

8. FLNKS hoped that on the basis of the political agreement on associated status, there would be a fixed period during which powers currently held by France would be transferred to the new State along with the necessary resources. At the end of that irreversible process, cooperation would be established between the new State and France. There would need to be guarantees to avoid any takeover by the central State. The population concerned in that process would be the population defined in article 2 of the 1988 referendum law.

9. The transitional statute would be the subject of political agreement between the three parties to the Matignon accords. A draft constitution for an associated State had been submitted to the United Nations in 1987 by FLNKS. FLNKS wished to achieve consensus on that draft with the other two parties to the Matignon accords. It was

well aware of the various constraints, particularly relations between the political forces, the diversity of the population, and the composition of the 1988 electorate, which did not correspond to the concept of population concerned as defined by the United Nations. FLNKS had therefore determined two essential conditions: recognition of the need to restore to the Kanak people its rights in society and in the new nation, including the use of the name Kanaky, a flag, an anthem, recognition of the Kanak culture and solution of land issues; and irreversibility of the progress towards sovereignty and independence from the point of view of the right of self-determination of the indigenous peoples and the sacrifices made by the Kanak people over its colonial history.

10. France could not continue to dominate a small people at the end of the twentieth century and of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, at a time of so many political and geopolitical changes in the world. Yet the recent history of decolonization demonstrated that the determination of certain Powers to pursue hegemonistic policies and protect their economic or geo-strategic interests under cover of assistance to the most disadvantaged peoples and countries could not be underestimated. That was true of the policy of France in New Caledonia and in the States of the Pacific region, which ignored the existing regional groups and aimed at safeguarding the interests of France as a Pacific power, to the detriment of the interests of the Pacific island States, including New Caledonia. Similarly, the French Government's refusal to restore to the Territory control over its natural resources was motivated by France's concern about energy self-sufficiency and being able to trade New Caledonia's resources.

11. FLNKS reaffirmed the right of the Kanak people to dignity and independence. That right was not negotiable: only the stages by which independence would be attained could be negotiated. Consequently, FLNKS would negotiate with its partners a consensus agreement on the principles of a statute for a State in association with France, a compromise solution which would lead eventually to full sovereignty. France must fulfil its historic responsibility in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV), the Charter, and General Assembly resolution 50/33.

12. *Ms. Winslow withdrew.*

Agenda item 18: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (*continued*)

Agenda item 90: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 91: Activities of foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination (*continued*)

Agenda item 92: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*)

Agenda item 93: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*)

Draft resolution in document A/52/23 (Part IV), chapter VIII, paragraph 9, submitted under item 90, on information from Non-Self-Governing Territories

13. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San

Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

France, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

14. *The draft resolution was adopted by 134 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.*

15. **Ms. Smith** (United Kingdom) said that, as in previous years, her delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution, although her Government would continue to comply with its obligations in respect of its dependent Territories under Article 73 *e* of the Charter. Her delegation could not accept the provision in paragraph 2 that it was for the General Assembly to decide when a Territory had reached a level of self-government sufficient to relieve the administering Power of its obligation to transmit information under Article 73 *e* of the Charter. Such decisions must be left to the Government of the Territory concerned and the administering Power.

16. **Mr. Scott** (United States of America) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote, as it had for the past five years, because under the draft resolution the General Assembly would make the determination as to whether a Territory had achieved self-government under the terms of the Charter. His Government felt that it was ultimately within the authority of the administering Power to determine when its obligations under Article 73 *e* of the Charter had ceased.

Draft proposals in document A/52/23 (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 12 and chapter VI, paragraph 11

17. **Mr. Scott** (United States of America) requested a separate vote on paragraph 7 of the draft resolution entitled "Activities of foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination" with a view to deletion of that paragraph. His delegation objected to the basic premise of the draft resolution that the mere presence of foreign economic activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories impeded self-determination. Although the draft resolution was a substantial improvement over previous years, his delegation would have to vote against it if paragraph 7 was not deleted or modified. The paragraph served no purpose, as paragraphs 4 and 5 already conveyed the concerns spelled out in it, and it implied that foreign economic activities were implicit in every Non-Self-Governing Territory by virtue of its status. Illegal fishing activities were always harmful, wherever they took place, but paragraph 7 implied that such activities were endemic to Non-Self-Governing Territories. His Government objected to that premise and reiterated its commitment to the preservation of marine life. It had a strong record of establishing conservation areas and marine preserves within its territory and in its administered Territories, as had been acknowledged by Guam.

18. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to vote on the proposal by the United States of America that paragraph 7 of the draft resolution in document A/52/23 (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 12 should be voted on separately. A recorded vote had been requested.

19. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Bulgaria, Israel, Mongolia, United Kingdom, United States.

Against:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining:

Australia, France, Russian Federation.

20. *The amendment proposed by the United States of America was rejected by 57 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.*

Draft resolution contained in document A/52/23, (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 12, submitted under agenda item 91, on foreign economic and other activities

21. **The Chairman** informed the meeting that a recorded vote on the draft resolution had been requested.

22. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bulgaria, France, Micronesia (Federated States of), United Kingdom.

23. *The draft resolution contained in document A/52/23 (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 12, was adopted by 140 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions.*

Draft decision contained in document A/52/23 (Part III), chapter VI, paragraph 11, submitted under agenda item 18, on military activities and arrangements

24. **The Chairman** informed the meeting that a recorded vote on the draft resolution had been requested.

25. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahrain, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Republic of Korea, Ukraine.

26. *The draft resolution contained in document A/52/23 (Part III), chapter VI, paragraph 11, was adopted by 90 votes to 44, with 2 abstentions.*

Draft resolution contained in document A/52/23 (Part IV), chapter VII, paragraph 14, submitted under agenda item 92, on implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies

27. **The Chairman** informed the meeting that a recorded vote on the draft resolution had been requested.

28. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.

29. *The draft resolution contained in document A/52/23 (Part IV), chapter VII, paragraph 14, was adopted by 102 votes to none, with 44 abstentions.*

30. **Ms. Backes** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Union was pleased with the progress that had been made on the draft resolution concerning economic activities. In contrast, it had voted against the draft resolution on military activities, as it dealt with a matter that did not appear on the agenda referred by the General Assembly to the Fourth Committee. Regarding the resolution on the specialized agencies, the European Union continued to support those agencies, but because it attached particular importance to respect for their respective mandates, it had abstained.

31. **Mr. Scott** (United States of America) explained that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the latter resolution because it did not deem it appropriate or necessary to link the work of the specialized agencies to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Those agencies' individual mandates provided them with adequate guidance.

Draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.6, submitted under agenda item 93, on study and training facilities

32. **The Chairman** informed the members that Argentina, Jamaica, Sudan, Thailand and Trinidad and Tobago had also become sponsors of the draft resolution.

33. *Draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.6 was adopted unanimously.*

Financial implications of draft resolutions

34. **Mr. Sattar** (Secretary of the Committee) said that there would be no additional financial implications for the programme budget should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.5 on the question of Western Sahara. Similarly, the adoption of the draft resolutions on the other Non-Self-Governing Territories contained in document A/52/23 (Part V), chapter IX, paragraph 31, and (Part VI), chapter X, paragraph 20, would not entail any additional provisions under the programme budget.

Omnibus draft resolution on the questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, Tokelau, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands, submitted under agenda item 18 (A/52/23 (Part VI), chap. X, para. 20)

35. **Ms. Smith** (United Kingdom) said that her delegation proposed the deletion of the word "rising" before "unemployment" in the last preambular paragraph of section B (IX) of the draft resolution, since unemployment on St. Helena, while high at 18 per cent, was in fact steady.

36. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposed amendment without a vote.

37. *It was so decided.*

38. **Mr. Scott** (United States of America) said that he wished to propose a correction, rather than an amendment, to the draft resolution. The original consensus resolution had begun with two preambular paragraphs which read: "Noting the report by the administering Power that most of the American Samoan leaders had expressed satisfaction with the island's present relationship with the United States of America" and "Noting also the non-participation of representatives of the peoples of American Samoa in the last two regional seminars". Given the importance of recognizing the point of view of the people of the Territory, their understanding of their current situation and the evolution of their notion of self-determination, he felt it important to maintain the original two preambular paragraphs which took into account the views of the Samoan leaders. If those paragraphs were reinstated, the fourth preambular paragraph of the current resolution could be deleted.

39. **Mr. Samana** (Papua New Guinea), speaking as Chairman of the Special Committee, expressed concern at any attempt to include the purported opinions of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories regarding the status of their relationship with the administering Power. Their views should be ascertained by means of a proper and normal process acceptable to the international community, to ensure an accurate understanding of what those views were. He therefore wished to keep the text as presented.

40. **Mr. Scott** (United States of America) said that in the preceding six months the Committee had negotiated a consensus text which agreed that the United States should be engaged in a dialogue in order to move forward. In its opening declaration, his delegation had expressed its appreciation for that new progress and dialogue. Yet it now found itself faced with changes which had not been brought to its attention by any representative of the Special Committee. His delegation had eagerly anticipated renewed dialogue with the Committee and had sent a letter to the Committee outlining the areas in which progress had been made. That was why he felt it essential for the original consensus text to be reinstated.

41. **Mr. Nuñez-Mosquera** (Cuba) said that the language in the draft resolution as presented accurately reflected the discussions between the administering Power and the Committee, and there should not be any changes at the moment of the vote.

42. **Ms. Smith** (United Kingdom) said that as the other party in the informal dialogue with the Special Committee, her delegation appealed to the Chairman of that Committee to reconsider his position. It was quite in order for the United States to request a return to the previous consensus resolution and neither the United States delegation nor her own had been parties to the discussions of the Special Committee, nor had they been informed of the tenor of those discussions. The Chairman of the Special Committee should return to the consensus text, or the parties involved would no longer be able to work on a consensus basis; that would have serious consequences for the process and for future dialogue.

43. **The Chairman**, supported by **Mr. Akbaruddin** (India) and **Mr. Samana** (Papua New Guinea), suggested that consideration of the draft resolution should be postponed until the Committee's next meeting.

44. *It was so decided.*

Draft resolution in document A/C.4/52/L.3, submitted under agenda item 18, on the question of Gibraltar

45. *The draft resolution was adopted without a vote.*

Draft resolution in document A/C.4/52/L.5, submitted under agenda item 18, on the question of Western Sahara

46. *The draft resolution was adopted without a vote.*

47. **Ms. Backes** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union and of the associate countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, as well as of Iceland and Norway, welcomed the consensus adoption of the resolution. The European Union had always supported the holding of a free, regular and impartial referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. The successful talks led by the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Mr. James Baker, had created the conditions necessary for implementation of the United Nations settlement plan for Western Sahara.

48. The European Union hoped that the referendum would be held within the next 12 months. The United Nations must complete the identification process as quickly as possible and the European Union called on the parties concerned to cooperate fully with a view to the rapid implementation of the United Nations settlement plan and the agreements signed by them. The United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) would also continue to play a crucial role in the peace process, to which the European Union would continue to lend its full support.

49. **Mr. Snoussi** (Morocco) said that Morocco had always considered Western Sahara to be an integral part of its territory and had, since independence, been attempting to recover it, including with the assistance of the United Nations. While maintaining his delegation's traditional reservations about the jurisdiction of the United Nations and the framework of the discussions, he supported the draft resolution and would continue to cooperate fully with the United Nations in implementing the settlement plan. Thanks to the remarkable efforts of Mr. James Baker, the thorny question of identification had been resolved and all eligible Saharans would be allowed to vote. He hoped that the identification process would soon recommence and be finished as quickly as possible. He also hoped that those Saharans who had been forced to leave the Territory would be able to return; they would be welcomed by his Government and by the people of Morocco. He expressed confidence that the High Commissioner for Refugees would ensure their safe return to their homeland. He also hoped that the other party would now agree to play a role in their new country, a free and democratic Morocco.

Draft resolution in document A/52/23 (Part V), chapter IX, paragraph 31, submitted under agenda item 18, on the question of New Caledonia

50. **Mr. Terrier** (France) said that he wished to inform the Committee of the situation in New Caledonia since the signing of the Matignon Accords, while at the same time reiterating his delegation's reservations about the competence of the Committee in matters relating to New Caledonia.

51. During the preceding nine years, there had been great changes in the political, economic and social situation in New Caledonia. All the parties concerned had shown goodwill in working towards peace and a better future in the spirit of the 1988 Matignon Accords, in accordance with the terms of which progress had been made towards self-determination, decentralization and redressing economic and social imbalances with a view to preparing for the 1998 referendum. His Government was committed to development, and regular yearly consultations were held by the Committee to Monitor the Matignon Accords to discuss progress made and priorities for the coming year.

52. On an institutional level, the mechanism provided for by the Accords was in place, representatives from all provinces occupied positions of responsibility and all three provinces were exercising their full rights. In the area of the economy, the Government of France was working to stimulate the economy and provide jobs and had signed development contracts with all the provinces. Wide-ranging consultations were continuing and great progress had been made in developing the infrastructure of the island and the nickel mining industry. The development agency established in 1995 had focused on creating a development pole in the northern province and seeking new economic opportunities relating to fisheries, tourism and agro-food industries. Great efforts had been made in the area of education, especially at the secondary and professional levels, where there were growing numbers of graduates. An agency for the development of Kanak culture had also been created to promote local culture.

53. Since the signing of the Matignon Accords, New Caledonia's relationship with its neighbours had been transformed and contacts at all levels had increased. The Territory and the provinces had signed a cooperation agreement with Vanuatu and the Territory was becoming a full partner in the region. The Territory would continue to play an increasingly important role in the South Pacific region, and visits from regional delegations were increasing, which was an encouraging sign of support for the Matignon Accords. The dialogue with the signatories to the Matignon Accords would be broadened to include all political, social and economic actors in the Territory.

54. He expressed satisfaction that the draft resolution took into account positive changes in the Territory and the dialogue occurring therein. Once again, his delegation would not object to the draft and would not request a recorded vote. He stressed however that it was the opinion of his delegation that Article 73 of the Charter did not encompass New Caledonia nor any other of his Government's overseas Territories or departments, and that only the administering Power had the right to decide which Territories could be considered as non-autonomous; no resolution of the General Assembly could modify the Charter in that area or give the Assembly any jurisdiction. His delegation therefore remained of the opinion that the question of New Caledonia was a question of domestic jurisdiction as set out in Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter.

55. **Mr. Samana** (Papua New Guinea) said that he welcomed the parts of the statement made by the representative of France dealing with the development of New Caledonia, and was pleased by the fact that a ministerial delegation from the South Pacific Forum countries had been able to visit the Territory, and by its positive report on France's development assistance to it.

56. In opposition to the manner in which resources were being developed, the Kanak people had prevented the operation of the nickel mine. The authorities must take into account the genuine concerns of the people of the Territory regarding control over resources and the way in which they were used.

57. In the preparations for the 1998 referendum, the most important issue was voter eligibility. In that connection, the provisions of the Matignon Accords defining who had the right to vote had to be applied.

58. *The draft resolution was adopted without a vote.*

The meeting was suspended at 5.25 p.m. and resumed at 5.50 p.m.

Draft resolution in document A/C.4/52/L.4/Rev.1, submitted under agenda item 18, on the decolonization programme of the United Nations system

59. **Mr. Samana** (Papua New Guinea), speaking on behalf of the 38 sponsors of the draft resolution, said that it was not his intention to micro-manage the responsibilities of the Secretariat, or to obstruct the laudable reform process. However, the Fifth Committee had adopted biennial and medium-term plans to ensure that due attention was accorded to implementing the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

60. He was pleased at the Secretary-General's genuine consideration of the issues raised concerning the Decolonization Programme, and felt that a good compromise had been reached. He had therefore decided to withdraw the draft resolution, and requested that the Secretary-General's letter should be circulated as an official document.

61. **The Chairman** said that he would have the letter circulated.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.